

ALASKA DAILY EMPIRE

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ALASKA'S RAILROAD PROBLEM.

The federal railroad commission, which has been investigating railroad and possible railroad routes from the coast to the interior, have completed their labors so far as they have been able to do so, and they are now returning to Washington, where, in due time, their report will be made.

The impressions of the commission, coupled with the experiences that they have undergone, especially in traversing the interior country, will no doubt make interesting reading. Only one of the number, Dr. Alfred H. Brooks, of the United States Geological Survey, has had previous experience in the territory. He has been frequently in the country, since 1899, and he knows the various sections well. He also has an intelligent conception of Alaska's mineral resources to whose study he has devoted a considerable number of years. His knowledge, therefore, is intimate and practical. Furthermore, he has always evinced the keenest interest in all matters appertaining to the welfare and development of the territory, and has shown himself at all times a loyal friend.

The work of the railroad commission, however, can only be regarded as a mere "scouting expedition," but the report that they will make to the government may ultimately result in the adoption of some definite railroad policy for Alaska.

A bill was introduced in the Senate during the last special session of Congress providing for the construction of one thousand miles of "trunk railroad" in Alaska. The bill also stipulated that the government might buy or lease any railroad already built. Of these, there are two, the most important being the Copper River & Northwestern, running out of Cordova. The other is the Alaska Northern, its terminus being Seward. Another natural entrepot from the coast to the Yukon is Valdez. No doubt the commission will report on all these routes, and after their report is submitted, what then? Probably there will be a scramble to un-dermine the already constructed railway lines on the government. Perhaps these will be ignored and a new route recommended. More likely the whole matter will remain "in the air" for some time to come, as have many other important Alaska problems.

The fact can not be gainsaid that railroads and better transportation facilities are needed in Alaska. More especially from the coast to the interior. Transportation on the Yukon and its tributaries, is in the hands of a virtual monopoly—the Northern Navigation Company—and there is not a man, woman or child in the interior country who does not pay excessive tribute to this transportation company. The result is, practically, that that great section is seriously handicapped, and its development greatly retarded.

A railroad from some point on the coast to the interior would open up to mining and other development a concededly rich region, besides furnishing additional, if not cheaper, transportation facilities.

A WONDERFUL GAME LAW.

The Alaska game law is fearfully and wonderfully made. In the Bering Sea country and in the interior wild fowl can not be killed until nearly every migrating bird has plumed its wings and taken its flight southward. By the time the birds return in the spring the season is closed. In southern Alaska the law regards the bear, black or brown or grizzly, with a solicitude that denotes that it shall be given full and ample protection, when, as a matter of fact, the hunter is in more need of protection from one species of bear than is the animal itself. We observe that the Kodiak bear, for instance, was included in the game conservation policy because it is a royal animal and occasionally furnishes fine hunting for Congressmen, lords, dukes, millionaires and others of that ilk, with a retinue of gun-bearers, beaters, valets and helpers. That certain provisions of such a game law are violated need not be wondered at. Not long ago an interior preacher, who is fond of hunting, went out after ducks and geese during the closed season. The fowl were there by the tens of thou-

sands, full-fledged and milling around previous to migrating South. The hunter secured a good bag and staggered on his return to his home. A friendly soul gave him the information that a brace of deputy marshals and a game warden or two were lying-in-wait for him on his way up the river. The minister transferred his coat to another steamer, while he himself stopped off at a river town until the officers tired of their watch. He was not apprehended. But he complained that his game was entirely too "high" for his palate, by the time that it reached the cook. The game of Alaska should be carefully protected, but the protection afforded should be reasonable and not foolish.

THE INDIAN IN HISTORY.

It is conceded that the Indian problem is a vexatious one, as applied to Alaska, though not at all comparable to the Negro question in the South. It has been stated times without number that the Indian is an alien in his own country. This is true only in part. In the United States proper such Indians as have severed their tribal relations and are self-supporting are citizens. But in Alaska the conditions are somewhat anomalous. The native population supports itself, has never been a ward of the government, and has seen precious little of its paternal care, certainly not as much as the natives are entitled to.

This question, however, is as old as the discovery of America. It has its prototype in every new land. The Negroes of Africa have been enslaved and despoiled. The Congo atrocities are still fresh in the memories of men. They have been repeated and only recently, in South America—especially in the rubber regions—where alleged white Christians have been guilty of the most shocking atrocities. They have been murdered in cold blood, poisoned, maimed in the most shameful manner, because of the white man's "civilized" man's cupidity, his thirst for gold. And when their despoilers have been brought to the bar of public opinion, they have found apologists and defenders, with shameless alacrity.

The story of the North American Indian has been written in blood. Even the Pilgrim Fathers contributed to its blood-stained pages. Cortez and Pizarro, the Spanish adventurers, were its protagonists. It has been the fate of nearly every aboriginal people to be despoiled of their heritage. They have disappeared before the ruthless advance of what we are pleased to call civilization. The treatment accorded to the Indians of the United States since the very inception of our government has not been to our credit. Most of our Indian wars might have been avoided. It is the ever-recurring story of the white man's greed and treachery. It is an exemplification of one of the worst phases of progress—that only the weak shall perish, that only the strong shall survive.

But elsewhere, in the United States the Indian has had lands allotted to him; his reservations, the outgrowth of a more humane policy, when taken from him by the government have been paid for, or lands allotted in severalty, but even then he has not escaped the cupidity of the white man. In Alaska, however, the Indian may not secure lands for himself; he is a man without a country, left largely to struggle and exist as best he may. He needs encouragement. He should be generously aided in making himself self-supporting. He should be taught how to make a living, how to live, and he amply protected in his attempts at progression.

THE COUNTRY WILL BE SAFE.

The presidential campaign for the year of grace 1912, is over. Tomorrow the votes will be cast and counted. The noise of the campaign has ceased. After the votes are counted will come the shouting.

Two of the leading presidential candidates are doomed to defeat and disappointment, because of the result which tomorrow's voting will bring. Whoever they may be, however, they will take their defeat, without doubt, with true philosophy. It is an American characteristic to bow to the will of the people as expressed at the polls.

We are of those who believe that no matter whom may be elected as chief magistrate of this great republic, the country will be safe under his guiding hand. No single individual is powerful enough to send this nation to the "demonition how wows." All of the presidential candidates are high-minded, patriotic men, however much we may differ with them in their theories of government and their manner of applying them to practical use.

Fortunately our government is not a one-man institution, nor does the nation's material welfare depend upon the election of a particular candidate.

The sun will rise rise and set in the good old-fashioned way just the same the day after as the day before the national election.

The wheels of progress will not be stayed, nor will the commerce of the country be retarded because of the people's choice.

The political pessimists of today may be the optimists of tomorrow. The country will be safe in any event.

Long live the great republic!

SENATOR LAFOLLETTE NOT FOR ANY NOMINEE.

The attitude of Senator LaFollette, of Wisconsin in the present presidential campaign, was expressed in a recent speech which he made at LaCrosse, when he said he would not vote for Roosevelt, Taft or Wilson. He compared the suppression of competition through the growth of trusts to a huge cancer; the treatment of which requires great skill. "It is no job for a 'Bull Moose,'" said Senator LaFollette, "and judging by what has happened in the last four years, it does not seem to be a job for an amiable, easy-going man. A fellow over in New Jersey has been running a hospital with pretty good results, but he has not treated cancer."

"I propose to pursue an independent course. I will not vote for any of these three men."

Senator LaFollette said that he believed in a protective policy, but he thought it should be gauged on the basis of the real difference between the cost of production here and abroad.

SIDELIGHTS

Explorer Stefansson's discovery of red-headed Eskimos in the Arctic has been corroborated by another explorer, who seems to have "met up" with the same tribe during his wanderings. Ethnologically there is little importance in the discovery. The blonde Eskimos are, undoubtedly descendants of the blonde Norsemen. The interesting thing is as to how they got there and then lost their identity. Down in the Central American states an auburn-haired negro may be met quite frequently.

The oldest of the Alaska pioneers are fast being laid away in "God's Acre." It is related that in Juneau during the past few years many of the early settlers have been placed in Eternity's subdivision, and today another was laid away. A few still survive, some of them still hale and hearty, cheerful and optimistic. Among them is John I. White, whose residence in this region extends over a period of forty-three years. He has been in most of the British Columbia and Alaska mining camps. He was in Cassiar in the very early days, in the Omineca district, in Fortymile, and later in Dawson and Nome. Besides, he "crossed the plains" more than sixty years ago. His reminiscences of forty or fifty years ago would fill a big book.

Ketchikan expects to profit largely by the completion of the Grand Trunk Pacific transcontinental line, according to Charles E. Ingersoll, the Ketchikan lawyer and hotel proprietor, who was in Juneau recently. Prince Rupert is only a few hours' run from Ketchikan and Mr. Ingersoll says that fresh fish can be placed in "Eastern markets" by way of the Grand Trunk Pacific, a full week earlier than by the present method of transportation by way of Vancouver and Seattle, and he believes that in this way the fishing industry of the southern Alaska coast will be given a tremendous impetus.

Let everyone boost for a greater Juneau. There will be millions of dollars expended here and in this vicinity within the next three years, largely in development and construction work. It does not take a financier to figure out what that means. It includes the employment of many men, the increase of commercial and other business activities, the growth of this and neighboring communities. And now is a good time to begin preparations to meet the changing conditions. Juneau must soon be ready for a largely increased population, but it is well to be wise in time. Intending investors in any line should not be scared away by prohibitive prices, for instance in securing real estate. New industries should be encouraged and new enterprises welcomed. It is a poor policy to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. Likewise it never pays to act the part of the dog in the manger. The concern of one should be the concern of all.

The Empire believes in the encouragement of every legitimate home industry. This includes patronizing home business houses. These are aids in building up a community, factors in the road to progress. A dollar circulated in your home town helps many, for it moves around ceaselessly.

It sent abroad it never returns; it only helps the place where it is spent.

It is well to remind the public at large that the supply of labor in this district is fully equal to the demands. No one should come here expecting to find a job.

It is always well to be philosophical. Just remember that— "Ever where the light is thickest, Thou art either licked, or licked."

Tomorrow many people will stand at T. Rnagoddon "and battle for the Lord." Others will battle "like the devil."

Governor Wilson, at Rochester, N. Y., attacked the United States Senate, declaring that it is a "citadel of private interests," and that the people had not been in possession of that body for a generation. If this be true it is about time that the "people came into their own."

New York Greeks have sent \$110,000 home to aid Greece in its war with Turkey. This is an instance where one need not "beware when the Greeks come bearing gifts."

After all is said and done there are many human woes which are beyond the reach of Congress or courts.

The hatred of the people of the Balkan states which is well illustrated in the present war is easily accounted for. They have a real knowledge of the brutality of the Turk's character possessed perhaps by no other people. They have not forgotten the brick towers full of holes in which Sultan Pasha plastered heads cut off in the Serbian campaign. There is nothing poetic about the Turkish character.

Woodrow Wilson is credited with the following limerick, the result of a discussion by friends of his personal pulchritude:

As a beauty I am not a star;
There are others more handsome by far.
But my face—I don't mind it,
For I am behind it—
The people in front get the jar.

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Leaves Douglas for Juneau—8:30 a. m., 9:30 a. m., 12:05 p. m., 1:45 p. m., 3:30 p. m., 4:45 p. m., 7:05 p. m., 8:30 p. m., 9:30 p. m., 11:00 p. m.
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**This trip to Sheep Creek daily except 4:30 p. m. trip on Saturday, which is omitted and trips leaving Juneau at 6:30 p. m. and 11:00 p. m. are made instead, and Sheep Creek trips at 11:00 a. m., 6:30 p. m., and 11:00 p. m.

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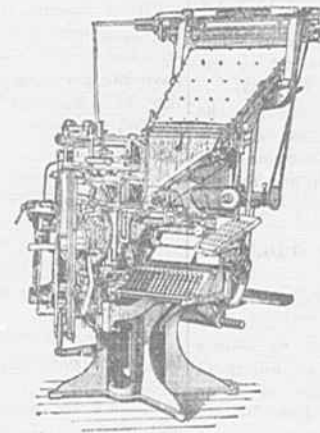
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